

The Ceiling
By Kay Cox

I heard the ceiling crack today
As it does when wind or heat
Disturb its settled ways.
Looking up I had to smile
As I saw the tongue and groove
Sedately hanging overhead.
How mother cussed that ceiling!
She had Daddy paper it a dozen times.
Still it cracked the paper
In long straight lines
Along the joists of pines.

The story was that Grandfather Cox,
Breakfasting in another house,
Had plaster from a poorly finished ceiling
Fall into his oatmeal bowl.
A determined, perhaps dogmatic man,
He vowed right then and there
No house of his would ever so offend.
And to insure his feeling,
He floored the ceiling.

I doubt that it was cheap
But through the entire house upstairs and down,
Tongue and groove flooring haughtily stares back
At upturned eye.
It is unique,
And certainly no plaster has ever descended
Nor offended.

It may serve another use.
Whenever I open my oven door
And the heat rises up
I hear the creak of hurried step
Across the flooring overhead
As if a hungry, friendly spirit tread
In hopes of warm, fresh baked bread.